

Title: Does heterosexual mean the same to you and I?: Discrepancies between participants' self-reported sexual orientation and researchers' definitions of heterosexuality

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Introduction: Research indicates young heterosexual men (ages 18-30) are more likely to engage in violence against homosexual men than other groups. Previous studies also suggest that self-identified heterosexual men who are prejudiced towards homosexual individuals may experience arousal towards other men. One way researchers have measured sexual orientation is through the Kinsey Heterosexual-Homosexual Rating Scale assesses men's prior sexual experiences and arousal toward others. The aims of this study were to determine 1) if the definition for heterosexuality used by researchers is different from participants' self-reported sexual orientation, and if those differences vary between racial groups and 2) whether participants who meet the researchers' criteria of heterosexuality, compared to those who do not meet those criteria, differ in their reports of sexual prejudice toward homosexual men.

Methods: We gathered data from a diverse racial/ethnic sample of 280 self-reported heterosexual male college students from the ages of 18 to 30, which was part of a larger study examining heterosexual male attitudes towards sexual minorities. Participants completed questions from the Kinsey Heterosexual- Homosexual Rating Scale, along with questions from The Attitudes toward Lesbians and Gay Men (ATLG) Scale. For this analysis, we examined participants' responses to the Kinsey scale in order to determine the percentage of the sample that did not fit the researchers' criteria of heterosexuality. To assess differences in sexual prejudice between these two groups, we compared the mean scores from the ATLG Scale using an independent sample T-test.

Results: Analyses revealed that 83% of the sample fit the researchers' standards for heterosexuality, while 15.8% deviated from these criteria. The analysis also suggests that African Americans, Latinos, and those who identified as belonging to an "Other" race were more likely to differ from the researchers' definition than Whites or Asians. Further analyses will be completed to report findings regarding the second aim of this proposal.

Discussion/Conclusion: The results indicate potential for changing how researchers define heterosexuality for different races and ethnicities. Future research should examine factors that may affect differences and similarities between those who meet researchers' criteria for heterosexuality and those who do not but still self-identify as heterosexual.